

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MARYLAND
Greenbelt Division**

In re

Case No. 24-13609

Smokecraft Clarendon, LLC

Chapter 11

Debtor.

_____ /

**APPLICATION TO APPROVE
EMPLOYMENT OF MAURICE B. VERSTANDIG, ESQ.
AND THE VERSTANDIG LAW FIRM, LLC AS GENERAL
REORGANIZATION COUNSEL TO SMOKECRAFT CLARENDON, LLC**

Comes now Smokecraft Clarendon, LLC (the “Debtor” or “Applicant”), pursuant to Sections 327 and 329 of Title 11 of the United States Code (the “Bankruptcy Code”), as well as Federal Rule of Bankruptcy Procedure 2014, and applies to engage Maurice B. VerStandig, Esq. and The VerStandig Law Firm, LLC d/b/a The Belmont Firm (collectively, “VLF”), as general reorganization counsel to the Debtor, and in support thereof states as follows:

1. This case was commenced when the Debtor filed a petition for chapter 11 relief, pursuant to Section 301 of the Bankruptcy Code, on April 29, 2024.
2. The Debtor is, and at all times relevant has been, a debtor-in-possession.
3. Approval is instantly sought of VLF’s employment to provide the following services to the Debtor as general reorganization counsel:
 - a. Prepare and file all necessary pleadings, motions, and other court papers, on behalf of the Debtor;
 - b. Negotiate with creditors, equity holders, and other interested parties;
 - c. Represent the Debtor in any adversary proceedings, contested matters, and other proceedings before this Honorable Court;

d. Prepare a plan of reorganization on behalf of the Debtor; and

e. Tend to such other and further matters as are necessary and appropriate in the prism of this case.

4. VLF does not represent any other person or entity in connection with this case, and both VLF and its principal are disinterested as that term is used in Section 101(14) of the Bankruptcy Code. VLF is not a creditor, an equity holder, or an insider of the Debtor; was not, within two years before the date of the petition for relief, a director, officer, or employee of the Debtor; and does not have any interest materially adverse to the interests of the estate or any class of creditors or equity holders, by reason of any direct or indirect relationship to, connection with, or interest in, the Debtor (or for any other reason). Further, VLF holds no interest adverse to the interests of the Debtor in connection with any of the matters for which employment is sought.

5. VLF has no legal connection with the Debtor, the creditors herein, or any other parties in interest, nor with their respective counsel, nor with the United States Trustee or any person employed in the office of the United States Trustee, except as expressly disclosed in the affidavit of Maurice B. VerStandig attached hereto.

6. VLF has agreed to represent the Debtor at the rate of Four Hundred Ninety Five Dollars and No Cents (\$495.00) per hour for attorney time and One Hundred Dollars and No Cents (\$100.00) per hour for paralegal time; it is respectfully suggested these proposed rates are fair and reasonable, and these rates are consistent with the skills and reputation of VLF and its principal attorney.

7. The Debtor has also agreed to provide compensation to VLF in the manner set forth in the Statement Pursuant to Rule 2016(b) filed herein. All compensation sought in this matter will

be subject to the review and approval of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland.

8. Attached hereto, and incorporated herein by reference, is the declaration of Maurice B. VerStandig, Esq. in support of this application.

WHEREFORE, the Debtor respectfully prays this Honorable Court (i) enter an order approving the employment of Maurice B. VerStandig, Esq. and The VerStandig Law Firm, LLC as general reorganization counsel to the Debtor; and (ii) afford such other and further relief as may be just and proper.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: March 29, 2024

By: /s/ Maurice B. VerStandig
Maurice B. VerStandig, Esq.
Bar No. MD18071
The VerStandig Law Firm, LLC
9812 Falls Road, #114-160
Potomac, Maryland 20854
Phone: (301) 444-4600
mac@mbvesq.com
Proposed Counsel for the Debtor

[Certificate of Service on Following Page]

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 29th day of April 2024, a copy of the foregoing was served electronically upon filing via the ECF system on all counsel who have entered an appearance herein, including:

- US Trustee - Greenbelt USTPRegion04.GB.ECF@USDOJ.GOV
- Maurice Belmont VerStandig mac@mbvesq.com,
lisa@mbvesq.com;mahlon@dcbankruptcy.com;mac@dcbankruptcy.com;verstandig.mau
ricer104982@notify.bestcase.com;verstandiglaw@recap.email

/s/ Maurice B. VerStandig
Maurice B. VerStandig, Esq.